

Aurum

Argentum

Ferrum

Cuprum

Magnesium  
carbonate

Phosphorus

Thuja

Lac caninum

In this new series of masterclasses, I will be considering eight major remedies from a symbolic, mythological and homeopathic perspective to better penetrate the unique genius of each substance and reveal its emotional, psychological and spiritual healing power. Studying homeopathic remedies in this way opens the mind and heart to the mysteries of life and the cosmos and imprints the healing images at the deepest level. The use of the words he or she in these articles refers to the male or female principles present in all of us and is not related to gender. Certain remedies are more conveniently spoken of as male, for example Aurum, and others as female, for example Cuprum, however, when their characteristics match the picture of the patient, they are suitable for the treatment of either gender.

by David Lilley

# Aurum metallicum

## GOLD – THE ELEMENT



Photo: Ancient Art and Architecture Collection Ltd

### The Noble One

Gold, known to the ancients as the metal of the gods, is the symbol of love, fidelity and purity, the icon of all that is sacred, noble and superior. Gold has always been the preferred metal for sacred objects and to embody the divine right and dignity of sanctified kings. Gold, and that which is golden, implies the quality of superiority. To the Christians, it was a fitting gift, with frankincense and myrrh, to lay before the Divine Child. To the alchemists, gold was the metal of the sun, monarch of the realm of metals, unsurpassed in excellence, perfection and eminence. It was their “Great Work” – the goal of transform-

ation and transmutation. They believed that the processes of the macrocosm are revealed in the processes of the microcosm, that even as the human soul grows and evolves through the alchemy of life experience to the perfection of the heavenly state, so the base, less perfect metals, such as lead, can develop in the womb of the earth to more perfect forms until the ultimate perfection of gold is achieved. In their laboratories they strove to hasten this natural transmutation. Though they failed, their efforts gave remarkable impetus to the development of science. Though their conclusions were in error, Aurum, when called for, is one of the greatest remedies in the

materia medica for resolving ego-based obstacles to spiritual unfolding; it works the alchemy of excellence.

### Duality

Ancient and alchemic wisdom intuited the divine essence of gold and perceived it as a symbol of spiritual attainment, artistically depicted as the golden aura or halo of the saints, yet, in harsh contrast, it is also the eternal object of humanity's lust and covetousness – ever enticing, obsessing and corrupting. In the history of the world, the pursuit of gold has always proved a catalyst in the birth, growth and survival of civilisations, culture and commerce, but the desire for gold may extinguish respect and reverence for the life and land of others, resulting in appalling crimes, deprivation, persecution and suffering. Civilisations and nations have been destroyed for gold. Here we witness its extreme and dreadful duality. A noble, lustrous, warm and magnificent metal, the very symbol of nobility of spirit, purity of heart and lofty ideals, debased to become the object of rapacious greed and arrogant pride. Symbolically and dynamically, gold possesses a disturbing ambivalence.

### Paradoxical properties

Forged in the cataclysmic explosion of a stellar supernova, gold's cosmic nature remains unsullied by the normal earthly processes of weathering, oxidation, corrosion, rust and calcification; gold remains incorruptible. Like a resplendent, luminous visitant from a higher dimension, it sheds glory and light upon the world, but remains distant and aloof. Gold, although on the earth, is not of the earth. In the light of the sun it is radiant, possessing a beautiful, glowing lustre and serene splendour; in the dark of night it can only reveal its immense density, its massive weight, its metallic coldness and hardness. In this opposition lies the personal tragedy of many a gold-being: a person of vast ability, promise and vitality dragged down by deepest despair, even to self-destruction. Gold possesses a peerless brilliance, but also a profound darkness.

Like humanity, whose spiritual-mortal state it parallels, gold carries its contradictions and contrasts within itself. Despite its ponderous mass, it is the most ductile and malleable of all substances on earth. It can be drawn into a fine wire of incredible length and microscopic proportions without breaking; it can be beaten into the finest, translucent, gold-leaf and rendered into the most tenuous gold-film, thousandths

of a millimetre thick, without losing its cohesion. Gold reveals an inner plasticity and fluidity that belie its external nature and hint at unique and mysterious forces within. At once, it matches the splendour of the sun, displays ethereal properties and is immune to earth corruption, yet has a powerful affinity for the irresistible force of gravity, descending more deeply into the dark reaches of the earth than most other metals. As a remedy, it has the capacity to penetrate into the deepest recesses of the unconscious to release and resolve old emotions, oft repressed out of memory. Aurum can heal the wounded child within the adult.

### Personality polarities

In terms of human duality, Aurum matches the extreme contrasts of spirituality and materialism, detachment and addiction, reverence and fanaticism, resolve and vulnerability, love and hate, dispassion and envy, altruism and self-absorption, aspiration and desire, integrity and corruption, bliss and despair, transcendence and suicide. It is for the idealist whose fantasies and romantic notions soar beyond the reasonable: it is for the pragmatic rationalist whose thoughts remain anchored to the physical dimension. Its splendour speaks of the "old soul" who brings the message of wisdom and love to humanity; its heaviness portrays a solemnity and seriousness of nature, or a tendency to be weighed down by negative emotions. While the radiance of gold is apparent, its darkness is hidden; the Aurum being's inner nature is often concealed from others – masked, private and secretive.



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### The Sun God

The earliest civilisations all likened gold to the sun and perceived the glorious, radiant metal as the symbol of the Sun God, the supreme deity, therefore representing divine and royal, wisdom and power. By association with the sun, gold is a masculine, solar symbol, just as silver, the metal of the moon, is a feminine, lunar symbol. In many traditions, gold was identified as the very substance of divinity: the flesh of the all-seeing Ra in Egypt, and in keeping with the paradoxical nature of the metal, the faeces of the bloodthirsty, Sun God Huitzilopochtli in Aztec-Mexico. In Hindu doctrine, gold was visualised as "mineral light", a luminous residue of the sun itself, left as threads in the earth. Romance took the allegory further, divining that through its god-like power, the sun, in the course of its myriad revolutions, spun a loving web of golden threads about the earth – and well may it be so – for sun, love and gold are one.

### Apollo

To the Greeks, gold bore a mystical relationship to the Olympian god Apollo. He was the Hellenic Sun God, also known as Phoebus Apollo – Phoebus meaning "bright, shining or pure". The ancients saw him as splendid and radiant, the epitome of youthful, masculine beauty, representing all that is aesthetic, harmonious, moderate and balanced in life. He possessed the same serene aloofness as gold, the same warmth, depth and nobility of spirit, but remained always at a distance, removed and controlled. He was the enemy of barbarism and the champion of temperance. His characteristics and nature reflect imper-



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tant facets of the Aurum archetype and ego-personality. He was a favoured son of Zeus, the Sky God, a crown prince in a patriarchal hierarchy governed by logic and reason. The left-brain perspective dominates the Apollonian consciousness. This left-cerebral bias is expressed through right-somatic responses and when dysfunctional produces symptoms predominantly on the right side of the body. This is true of the Aurum symptomatic picture.

### The Delphic Oracle

The most famous and hallowed shrine of ancient Hellas was the Delphic oracle of Apollo. As God of Prophecy, this was Apollo's chief sanctuary. Here he was served by his high priestess, the prophetess known as the Pythia or Pythoness. The oracle exerted a pivotal influence on the life of all Hellas, and became its spiritual heart. Communities as well as individuals consulted it for guidance. It was believed that at Delphi the dark and disorderly aspects of the cosmos had been defeated by, and subordinated to, Apollo, the celestial seer, counsellor and law-giver, whose mediating power, expressed through the Pythia, could give mortals divine guidance for coping with the vicissitudes and dangers of life. The consultation took place in the innermost sanctuary (*adyton*), in which stood the sacrificial, navel stone (*omphalos*) which marked the centre of the world as determined by Zeus, who released two eagles, one from the east and one from the west, which met at Delphi. Delphi was thus regarded as the centre, heart, navel or womb of the world (*Delphi* or *Delphos* signifies womb). The heart and the uterus, both hollow, muscular organs, are metaphorically and by reflex related and

Aurum has a marked affinity for both.

### Correspondences

From these considerations vital correspondences emerge. The sun is the celestial image of divinity; gold, "crystallised sunlight", is the image of solar light and radiance, hence of divine consciousness, wisdom, perfection, truth and love and of the sublime in man. The image of the sun in the earth is gold; the image of the sun in the body is the heart, for just as the sun radiates life-giving energy to the solar system, so the heart circulates blood, oxygen, warmth, nutrients and life to the body. The symbol of gold in the body is therefore also the heart, but so too the uterus, which harbours, nurtures and brings forth life (this latter relationship reveals the less obvious feminine aspect of gold). The sun and gold of the conscious mind is the will, which radiates confidence, hope, courage, power, motivation, drive and ambition to the emotional being. The sun and gold of the soul is the conscience, the voice of the higher self, radiating virtue, silent knowledge and spiritual aspiration to the lower-self.

When man's sun or gold energy dims, his sublime qualities are obscured. He experiences loss of will, loss of heart, loss of power and loss of conscience. The focus of life becomes materialistic and egocentric, and disease of the heart (or uterus) may result. When the sun, heart and will of Aurum set, hope, joy and optimism are gone and only desire for death remains.

### Dionysos

The ambivalence of Aurum is revealed in the mythological dynamics of the Delphic oracle. In the inner precinct of

Apollo's temple was the grave of Dionysos, his half-brother. The risen god also had his sanctuary at Delphi. During the three mid-winter months of the year, Apollo always departed for the blessed and mysterious land of the Hyperboreans (the land beyond the north wind). In his absence Dionysos enjoyed sole rule and worship at Delphi. He was the antithesis of Apollo, being the God of Ecstasy and Rapture. He was exquisitely androgynous.

Although a god, Dionysos was also priest of the Great Goddess, and, unlike Apollo, who stood for all things masculine, he was a votary of the female principle – the sacred feminine. He represented spontaneity, passion, intensity and freedom, but also wildness, sensuality, excess, frenzy, madness and destruction. To this day, his is the realm of uninhibited emotions, of insatiable desires, of the fantastic and the irrational. The right brain perspective dominates his consciousness. As God of the Vine (Bacchus), his veneration invites gratification of the senses, intoxication and the use of recreational drugs, which release inhibitions, heighten the perceptions and induce altered states of consciousness, but instead of setting the psyche free, bring dependency, decline and downfall.

Dionysos was a god who was victimised, suffered and died and was resurrected (that is he descended into the regions of the shadow, confronted his darkness and was redeemed). He is the feminine and shadow side of Apollo and he is the feminine and shadow side of Aurum, most often repressed, hidden and unrealised, because above all Dionysos is the masked god. Aurum in its deepest and most morbid depression, more than any other remedy, wears a mask of normalcy, belying the inner anguish. Aurum, like Dionysos, needs to bring his darkness, his shadow-self and his femininity into the light.

### Archetypal conflict

This sharing of the most sacred shrine of the ancient world, by two gods, is critical to the understanding of the archetypes they symbolise and to an understanding of Aurum. An intense and extreme polarity exists between these two divinities: "The measured, balanced, aloof Apollo in contrast to the frenzied, drunken, mad Dionysos" (Twentyman).

Behind a serious, solemn and even sanctimonious façade, the lower Aurum may harbour insistent, hedonistic urges. Often the sacred and the profane are joined in moral contention. A similar

primordial struggle is found in other remedy archetypes – Lachesis, Anacardium, Thuja and Lilium tigrinum.

### Insignia

Apollo's insignia were the bow and the lyre, each representing a major attribute of the god, for he was above all the Archer God and the God of Music. Even the symbols of this majestic deity reveal two poles of activity and cerebral dominance: the intellectual and the artistic. In the balanced and the advanced Apollo/Aurum, these two elements are equally represented in the make-up of the individual. However, our modern society encourages the archer aspect at the expense of the creative nature and this emphasis, imposed on a golden being, is responsible for much of the emotional and psychological difficulties of the archetype and the pain and heartache of those who love them.

### The Archer

The archer views his goals objectively, impersonally and analytically at a distance, gaining a broad overview before prioritising, aiming with care and precision, and only loosing his arrow after careful forethought and deliberation. He symbolises a person who has clear vision, highly developed powers of observation, focus and concentration, and has defined goals and ambitions with the vigour, confidence and determination to attain them. His target is the bull's-eye: the mark of excellence, success and highest achievement.

This determination requires training, proficiency, intensity, uncompromising application and preparation, discipline, meticulousness, perfectionism and the willingness to sacrifice all other interests, desires and even relationships in the pursuit of their investment. With their immense abilities and drive they usually rise to the very peak of their profession or sphere of endeavour. These are all prime Aurum characteristics. Unfortunately success, achievement and status become their identity and their measure of self-worth. Thwarted ambition, dashed hopes, financial loss, failure, loss of honour or reputation and any blow to their self-esteem can plunge them into depression and despair.

### The Artist

Apollo is depicted carrying a golden lyre,



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denoting his role as God of the Fine Arts – music, poetry, literature, sculpture and eloquence, all of which demand passion, emotional turbulence and the inspiration of imagination and fantasy. This is all too often Apollo/Aurum's repressed aspect, overruled by a powerful will and intellect. He lives too much in his head and too little in his heart; too much in his thoughts and too little in his feelings. However, music has special significance for Aurum. They have a deep love and need for it, especially classical and sacred music, which can even relieve their pain and suffering. The combined traits of relief from music, deep religiousness and exacting perfectionism are strongly indicative of Aurum.

### Unrequited love

Despite his manly beauty, Apollo was singularly unsuccessful in love and often rebuffed. His greatest and most enduring love was cherished for the mountain nymph Daphne. It is said that to spite him for claiming to be the better archer, Eros, the God of Love, shot a golden love-kindling arrow into Apollo's heart, at the very moment he first beheld Daphne, and then shot a leaden love-repelling arrow into the heart of Daphne. She therefore fled his advances in terror. As he was about to overpower her and claim her for his own, she cried out to her father, the river god, to spare

her. She was instantly transformed into a laurel tree. Still loving her, Apollo made the laurel his sacred tree and wore a laurel wreath in his hair. Being associated with the god, the laurel, like gold, became the symbol of victory and triumph – a symbol which often graces the brow of a splendid Aurum.

### Hatred and revenge

Aurum is an important remedy for unsuccessful love, rejection, betrayed friendship and loss of a loved one or beloved pet. It is a jealous and possessive archetype and when spurned a dark side may emerge, which maliciously desires to hurt the one who has caused the humiliation. Apollo courted Cassandra, princess of Troy, and bestowed the gift of prophecy upon her; when she refused his attentions he punished her by decreeing that no one would believe her prophecies. Likewise, he fell in love with the Sibyl of Cumae and granted her longevity; when she withheld her favours, he cruelly retaliated by denying her prolonged youth. Over thousands of years, she was transformed into a hideous, wizened creature that longed only to die. Aurum is capable of implacable resentment and vengeful hatred.

### The Sublime One

When the finest, translucent leaf-gold is held up to the light a most magnificent, shimmering green colour is revealed. It is the colour of the fourth, the love chakra, a whirling vortex of dynamic energy situated in the heart region. The alchemy of life gradually and inexorably separates the spirit-gold from the ego-dross and the golden being transcends the personal flux of ambivalence and conflict. They transform their base qualities – the passions and the instinctual nature – into the imperishable nobility of universal compassion and love, and it becomes their mission to express the beauty of the spirit through their thoughts and words.

Aurum is the sage, the wise counsellor, who has experienced all things and attained to wisdom. The innocence of a child and the enlightenment of a seer are united in gold. Gold in its highest form no longer seeks, it has found; it no longer believes, it knows. Gold asks that we trust and dare, for only when we trust can we surrender, and only when we surrender can we fully receive – even that which lies beyond the north wind!

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